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ABSTRACT

THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THIS DOCUMENT: The research summarized here suggests that: Children learn more than academic content from their school experiences, especially how to behave in nonfamily groups. Congruence between the school and community can contribute significantly to a sense of community among both adults and youth, but at some sacrifice in academic quality. The prominence of peer social interaction in schools can displace the academic function of schools, especially at the high school level. But peer interaction can also serve to reinforce organizational and academic norms. The prominence of peer interaction among secondary school students is not solely determined by student characteristics; it is a response to the structure and climate of schools. Marked differences in student behavior and school climate can be attributed to the beliefs and practices of teachers and administrators and the ways in which they interact to form a social system. Small high schools offer more opportunities per student for participation in academic and extracurricular activities, especially in responsible positions. Small-school students, including academically marginal students, participate in a greater variety of settings and report more and deeper satisfaction from their participation than students in large schools. Resource Information Service (RIS) provides ASCD members access to research and sources of information on selected topics. The information is available through RIS-sponsored research syntheses, RIS columns in "Update," and the quarterly publication of "Curriculum Update." (Author)

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Highlights from Research on School and Classroom Ecology

The research summarized here suggests that:

- Children learn more than academic content from their school experiences, especially how to behave in nonfamily groups.
- Congruence between the school and community can contribute significantly to a sense of community among both adults and youth, but at some sacrifice in academic quality.
- The prominence of peer social interaction in schools can displace the academic function of schools, especially at the high school level. But peer interaction can also serve to reinforce organizational and academic norms.
- The prominence of peer interaction among secondary school students is not solely determined by student characteristics; it is a response to the structure and climate of schools.
- Marked differences in student behavior and school climate can be attributed to the beliefs and practices of teachers and administrators and the ways in which they interact to form a social system.
- Small high schools offer more opportunities per student for participation in academic and extracurricular activities, especially in responsible positions. Small-school students, including academically marginal students, participate in a greater variety of settings and report more and deeper satisfaction from their participation than students in large schools.

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